The Message of the Lord's Prayer

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Fannie Casseday Duncan

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To Men of the Twentieth Century

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By
FANNIE CASSEDAY DUNCAN

PHILADELPHIA
THE JUDSON PRESS
BOSTON CHICAGO ST. LOUIS NEW YORK
LOS ANGELES KANSAS CITY SEATTLE TORONTO

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Published November, 1919

TO

THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER

Samuel Cassedy

AND OF MY AUNT-MOTHER

Miss Mary Ann McNutt

AT WHOSE KNEES I LEARNED TO LISP
AND IN WHOSE LIVES I FOUND ILLUSTRATED
THE BEAUTIFUL LESSONS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER
THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED

Introduction

New times give new meanings to our faiths. Each generation needs to have its inherited faiths and institutions revitalized. There is always danger that beliefs and faiths will become crystallized. Truth is a seed, not a crystal.

Calamity need not be heaven-born or divinely ordered, but often we see more clearly from the valley of adversity than from the mountain peak of prosperity. Spiritual vision is far-sighted, and from the depths we see more clearly and call more earnestly upon the name of the Lord. The whole world in the recent extremity has become sensitive to the divine voice and sensible to the fact that human beings always need divine help.

While every soul feels new needs, every life new cravings, and every will and heart new impulses, it is the gift of the chosen few to gather our aspirations into thought and speech, our cravings into prayer, and our impulses into resolution and conviction. Fannie Casseday Duncan has performed for her readers this important

service. She has enabled us to express the new aspirations of our souls, the cravings of our hearts, and the resolutions of our wills in the new meaning of our Lord's Prayer. Thus are we able, with our matchless divine Leader, to lift up our minds and hearts with the hallowed call, "Our Father"; we are able to phrase the cravings of our lives into the earnest, sincere petitions of our Master's Prayer, and with him we are able to say, "Thy will (not mine) be done."

With new reverence for our Father, with sincere petitions offered and their answer assured, we make new resolution to do the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven.

Fannie Casseday Duncan has fully justified her right and call to add one more treatise to the interpretations of the Lord's Prayer. Truth can never be made too plain to man; and to the mind and soul seeking the secret of right relations with God and with man, this treatise may prove the key that unlocks bolted doors, the lamp that lights up darkened rooms, or the companion that introduces the reader to man's greatest Teacher, and the soul's dearest Friend.

WILLIAM ARTHUR GANFIELD.

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Foreword

WHY another treatise on the Lord's Prayer? The world war brought to mankind many wonderful things besides our victory. Perhaps the most unexpected of these was a recognition of the immanence of God in the life of man. To many it was a new perception. Face to face with death and the inevitable, men came to appreciate their own utter helplessness. Many a father, his son taken from his side and sent to stern commanders and strange duties, felt his own powerlessness before some higher authority, and, out of an anguished heart and weeping eyes, got a new sense of invisible adjustments. Many a soldier wrote home of the realization of eternity which came to him under shot and shell or the deadly fumes of gas. Often he wrote of how the thought of the home prayers came to him with tremendous force and sustained him in the day of battle. He told that over and over the words of the Lord's Prayer, learned at his mother's knee and half-forgot, came to comfort and bless him. The

broken body and shed blood of thousands of men around him, who had gladly poured out the rich red wine of their life for a vision, gave a new and deeper symbolism to the prepared communion table and the mystic words of the sacramental supper. "Father," "Saviour," "Comforter," were no longer mere words, but passionate cries from a human heart to the heart of God. Sir Oliver Lodge had called prayer "the forgotten secret of the church." The world war made it the open communion of mortals with the Immortal One.

> Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O Lord!
> I am come into the deep waters
> Where the floods overflow me.
> I wait for the Lord,
> My soul doth wait.
> O thou that hearest prayer,
> Unto thee shall all flesh come!

The spiritual needs of our times seem to call for a restatement of the uses and beauty of prayer. We live in an age saturated with materialism. It is an age of philanthropies, of organization and institutions, of charity reduced to an exact science and dispensed by paid employees. The saints of our day boast that they do not

"dream dreams, see visions, communicate with angels, or go out not knowing whither they are sent."

John R. Mott once said, "An alarming weakness among Christians is that we are producing Christian activities faster than we are producing Christian experiences."

But in the strain and stress of war, in the darkened homes of the Allies, and on the blood-soaked fields of Flanders, the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ came into its own again, and everywhere men are studying it with renewed and serious interest.

To the writer of this little book a call for a restatement of this model prayer came in her own hour of anguish, when all that was left her was to peer through the darkness and find God—Father, Saviour, Comforter.

The Message of the Lord's Prayer

Prayer

What is Prayer?

PRAYER, in its highest conception, is the direct and purposeful communion of a mortal with the unseen God. In its lower form it is an appeal from one in need to one who is able to give help. There are few who have not, at one time or another, recognized in it a concealed force, operating in some mysterious way among the affairs of men; and few there are who in great emergencies have not made more or less use of it. Over and again in the history of God-fearing nations, God has appeared suddenly, miraculously, in answer to prayer—as at the

Battle of the Marne, as at the Piave River, as at Mons. James Freeman Clark gives us an incident in early American history in these words:

> Our pioneer ancestors prayed the prayer of faith. When the wind howled round their lowly huts and the storm rushed darkly from the forests, when the fierce Pequot and the savage Philip with his wild tribes of Indians lurked in every shaded dell, when the crops failed and they were about to starve, they wrestled with God in prayer. They labored with God in prayer, as men labor in plowing a field, till, in the agony of their supplications, they fainted. And when help came, and the full-freighted ship sailed up the bay with its white sails spread, like some broad-winged bird, they believed that God had sent her in answer to their prayer.

America's latest historical national-prayer incident is reckoned from the day of fasting and prayer which President Wilson called upon all Americans to observe for the success of the arms of the Allies. From that very day there began to exist a change in the affairs of the world, and never again was Germany the domineering conqueror of the nations. The period from May to December is short. It was late in May when the whole American nation went up to the temples of God to pray and fast. It was early in December when General Allenby marched, bareheaded and

on foot, through the gates of Jerusalem, releasing the ruthless grasp of the Turks who had held the Holy City for centuries. Meantime the American forces turned the tide of battle at Château-Thierry, inaugurating a retrograde movement of the Germans which spread from the North Sea to Switzerland. Many times "getting right with God" has brought victory on the battle-field and prosperity within a nation.

The Secret of Availing Prayer

The one simple secret of availing prayer is abiding in Christ. He himself says, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and *it shall be done unto you.*"

No direction could be simpler than this. It is like a guide-post. The youngest reader need not mistake its meaning. Why then do so few persons prevail in prayer? Is the failure in the Promiser, or has the one promised not fulfilled the conditions imposed?

"IF." . . We are so apt to overlook the IFS of God. They make of what we call promises not promises at all, but covenants. A covenant is

an agreement between two or more people, but it always implies an IF. Effective prayer hangs on an IF—"If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Get a concordance and look up the IFS of the Bible. Do your prayers rise no higher than your lips and bring no answer? Do not blame God for that. Look within and see whether you have kept your side of the covenant.

What is it to abide in Christ? He himself gives the answer. He says it is like the vine and the branches of the vine. The branches are the blossomers, the fruit-bearers; they produce the odorous flowers which send out perfume on all the air and proclaim that the vine is near. The vine is the deep-rooted wood that goes down and gathers nourishment for the branches. Without the vine the branches could have no enduring life. As veins and arteries in the human body carry life-blood to all its tissues, so does the vine act for the branches. They abide in it, live by it, draw nourishment from it, wait upon its laws. The simple secret of the flowering, fruiting, odorous branches is absolute contact with their source of supply—the vine.

Is it easy to abide in Christ, so to become one with him as to achieve power through prayer? It grows easy from the doing of it. Nothing that is really valuable is easy. Some think that a large inheritance of money is a blessing of great value, but oftener than not it is a curse. Even if it does not prove a curse, the legatee soon learns that its possession involves much care and planning and time. Education is not easy, though it is very valuable. Social prestige is not easy. It calls for labor and heartburnings and misunderstandings and sorrow. Sometimes great blessings seem to come into a man's life suddenly, but research would reveal the fact that there has preceded them some kind of special training or preparation. A Lincoln or a Robert Burns may come suddenly upon the stage, out of commonplace careers, but there have always been rich possibilities hidden behind a daily routine of work. Great moments do not suddenly put great qualities into the soul of men: they simply bring to the front what was already there.

So if you wish to abide in Christ, the time to begin is right now. As in every other law of life, the sooner one begins the sooner one attains full development, for the beginning of the Christ life

enfolds that strange, progressive, persistent thing which man calls life. If you wait until tomorrow you have lost one day and have the tragedy of one day of arrested development. One who expects the attainment of holiness must yield patiently to the discipline of training. To secure the fruits of the Spirit the branches must feel the keen knife of the pruner.

How to Pray

"After this manner therefore pray ye."

The Lord's Prayer is a part of a wonderful instruction given by Jesus Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. Earlier, he had been calling attention to the difference between outward formalism and inward piety. In the very heart of his discourse he paused a moment to emphasize that the attitude of the heart in the secret of one's closet is the true measure of a man's piety.

"After this manner"—after some definite, well-considered manner, not glibly nor with distractions. What is the manner prescribed? "Enter into thy closet, shut thy door, pray to thy Father in secret." So slight a thing as going

quietly into a secret place and gently shutting the door impresses the soul with an inner atmosphere of force and peace. The praying man is sure, whatever his rank, to be a purposeful man.

Are these the only conditions? No. There is another thing to be done before the prayer begins: "If thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift, go thy way, be reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift." So are we taught that a right spirit toward our brother is the first requisite for acceptable prayer.

In no other part of the Bible is there a group of verses which so tersely expresses what might be called the Saviour's theology as does the simple phrasing of the Lord's Prayer. Proof of its divine origin may be discovered in the pregnant compactness of its seven petitions. Only seven petitions for all the necessities and wants of men! Why, we should think it would demand an immense volume! Yet these seven petitions comprise "the shortest, richest, fullest cry of the human heart," and they enfold the living norm of all spiritual activity. Given a God, and demand of him a prayer to cover the whole circuit of human

needs, and the Lord's Prayer will be found to meet every requirement. It is "so brief that it does not weary the weakest, so simple that a child may say it and understand it, so full and rich that the wisest scholar finds it to transcend his mental growth." It is quickly memorized, slowly fathomed. It may be used by Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, Protestant, or Catholic. It is absolutely outside the pale of sect.

It is strange but true that this prayer is the only shadow of a ritual ever suggested by Jesus Christ. Some time ago the following paragraph went the rounds of the public press:

> There was once a minister of the gospel
> Who never built a church;
> Who never preached in one;
> Who never founded a new sect;
> Who never belonged to any sect;
> Who was known to have publicly drunk wine with sinners;
> Who never received a salary;
> Who never asked for one;
> Who never used a prayer-book or hymn-book;
> Who never hired great musicians or singers to draw people to hear the word;
> Who never went through a course of theological study;
> Who never was ordained;
> Who never was even converted;
> Whose abiding-places were always among the poor;

Who made no distinction between sinful men and sinful women.

Do you know who this strange preacher was?

Of him Dr. Lyman Abbott wrote:

Jesus Christ did not even counsel his disciples to unite in any form of public worship. Once his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray. "Ask your heavenly Father," he replied, "for the things you want, precisely as your children ask you. Are you hungry? Ask him for bread. Are you perplexed? Ask him for guidance. Are your temptations too strong? Ask him to help you to overcome them." Jesus Christ did not prescribe his prayer as a form. He used it as an illustration. When he came to earth, the prevailing feeling toward God, or the gods, was one of fear. He brought into the world a new interpretation of God. Christianity is not the same as churchianity. It is a new life. It is wanting in some who call themselves Christians. It is radiant in some who have never called themselves Christians.

The Lord's Prayer

The Construction of the Lord's Prayer

THE construction of the Lord's Prayer is quite analogous to the construction of the Ten Commandments. The first group of the Commandments teaches us our attitude toward God, thus:

I. Thou shalt have no other God.
II. Thou shalt not make any image for worship.
III. Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain.
IV. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

The next commandment, the Fifth, seems to be a break in the continuity. It gives us a little shock, as of something out of place; but it is really a gradual and happy gradation from the thought of God to the thought of man. It is the one commandment to which the lawgiver added a blessing for its observance. It reads, "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land."

The second group of the Commandments outlines very laconically and very rigidly what must be our conduct toward our fellow man. Here is the second group:

VI. Thou shalt not kill.
VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
VIII. Thou shalt not steal.
IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's possessions.

These five form a crescendo, rising from the crude and savage act of killing to the subtle and sly sin of taking away a neighbor's character or of coveting his wife.

The Ten Commandments are all positive "Thou shalts" and "Thou shalt nots." No reasons why are given. It is like talking to children of the nursery. The orders are guide-posts, marking the way for safe progress, or warning that there is danger ahead. The Lord's Prayer did not abrogate the Commandments. It simply amplified them and made them spiritual.

The prayer, like the Commandments, is divided into groups. The first three emphasize our duty toward God; the last three, our duty toward our

fellow men. They are broken in the center by a very human petition—" Give us this day our daily bread." It is a petition very dear to humanity, because it tenderly recognizes our daily needs and God's daily providing care for them. The first group of the prayer runs thus:

I. Hallowed be thy name.
II. Thy kingdom come,
III. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The second group of petitions recalls our trespasses, our temptations, our perils, and begs for deliverance from them. As in the Commandments the teacher pauses to comment on a certain portion, so in the prayer, he stops to say, " For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses."

It is suggestive that our Lord did not say " IF ye pray " but " WHEN ye pray." We thus learn that the Creator expects prayer from his creature. He orders it, so do not doubt its efficacy. It has lately been proved that man can take the laws of nature and compel them to do at his bidding things which a few decades before would have been declared impossible. Flying through the air and carrying great weights in aeroplanes

is an illustration. If man can do this, do you think God is less capable to combine or reconstruct his own laws in some new emergency? " Believe me," says Tennyson,

> More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of.

And John Wallace says,

> Prayer moves the Hand which moves the world.

We do not know how God may be, at our request and while we pray, directing the forces of nature to work together for what man might call a miracle.

Some events are contingent on prayer. No more tragic sentence appears in the Bible than Christ's cry over Jerusalem, " How oft would I. . . and ye would not." We have in Matthew this statement, " He could do no mighty works there *because* of their unbelief." Opportunity, master of human destinies, had to pass them by, although Jesus Christ, Master of heavenly forces, was waiting to bless them. I sometimes think the old adage, " Man proposes: God disposes," should be turned around and should read, " God proposes, man disposes."

Has some unbelief detained you from an answer to prayer? Some lack of cooperation kept from you your waiting blessing?

The Invocation

This pregnant prayer opens with the yearning human cry "Our Father!" This marks the new order, the New Testament, the vivid change from law to love. Dare we use these words and not note their deep meaning?

OUR—not *my*. I am no privileged child who may think of myself as especially God's, free to scorn any whom I may judge to be my inferiors. Neither am I cut off from other children of God who seem so far above my rank that I dare not think of their kinship except when I am at the altar. Nor may I forget my relationship to those who are overburdened, overtempted, borne down with sorrows and poverty; nor my oneness with that army of the sinned-against who slip from duty through despair. "Our" means the inclusion of all these—children of the one compassionate, yearning Father. To speak the word "OUR" from the deeps of the heart would start

within us a revolution that could not stop short of a changed life. "OUR" is a dynamic to shatter the whole present social fabric. It defends the soul against haughtiness and vanity. The thought of the solidarity of the human race began with the institution of the Passover. No one was permitted to celebrate it alone. It symbolized the fellowship of God's people in joy and sorrow.

The other word of the wonderful invocation is FATHER. It is a term given in concession to our limited comprehension, for there is no earthly title which can picture forth God's relation to man. It is one of the many titles he uses to adapt to our limited conception God's nearness to man. We are left to guess what it implies by visioning the human relation of father and child. Even then there are many to whom this tender name brings no illumination.

This was once illustrated to me in my Sunday School class of poor girls. We had been studying the Lord's Prayer, and the difference between the conceptions brought to two of the girls by the name "Father" was startling. One lived in the region of the famous "Cabbage-patch." Poverty, hunger, and dirt abode under her father's roof.

Sometimes the mother was sober; the father, almost never. After an absence, I went to look the girl up. While we talked the father came reeling home, and the first sight of him sent every child scurrying to a place of safety. I thought it no wonder I had signally failed to illustrate to that daughter a sense of the Fatherhood of God.

Soon after, my visits took me to the home of another of my girls. Back, back, back, through a blind alley to the very end of a swarming tenement-house I was directed. I found the mother at the wash-tub. While I was there a ragged little messenger from another part of the tenement came to ask if her mother might have the sudsy water when my hostess was through washing. She could not, because my hostess had planned to use it to wash up her "other room" with. Again the cry, "Father is coming," sounded, but every chubby pair of half-frozen legs ran to meet him. He was sooty and greasy with the black grime of his calling, but he lifted the tots in his arms and put his big hand tenderly over the shoulder of his wife, as he spoke to me shyly of his "bairnies" and the Sunday School. His scanty wage provided for eight souls, but what he lacked in lucre he made up in love. I

felt I could speak intelligibly to his daughter of the Fatherhood of God.

To me, back of the word "Father" is the greater word "Creator." Why do I say this? Because there come times, black and bitter, when, in some human extremity, man, passing by the Fatherhood of God, cries out, as Job did, to the Creator—cries imperiously, as a created thing, to the justice of his Creator and his responsibility for the man's existence. The broken-hearted creature asserts in orderly dignity his right to God's care and providing. Such days are dark days, and they come perhaps only to great souls in great emergencies; but they do come. Out of a sense of despairing helplessness and of the inexorableness of his fate, the man demands to plead his cause before him whose creation he is. In the lonely bewilderment of the cross, in the bitterness of his human agony, our Saviour's cry was not, "My Father, my Father," but it was, "Eloi, Eloi, why hast thou forsaken me?" Eloi is the term employed in Genesis for Creator.

"Father!" It is a wonderful word. The little boy is not capable of comprehending his father—not able to grasp his larger views for his growth and education, nor to await patiently their un-

foldings. Even the growing boy is apt to see in his father an autocrat, a critic, or judge. Too often he is to the child's thought a foreigner. He cannot fathom the father's deep sympathy or his longing for his son's highest all-round development. He cannot understand that development comes through discipline, or realize that fatherhood is often maintained at immense cost to the father heart.

But one day the boy becomes the man. He has reached manhood through many experiences, and he now judges by standards other than those of his childhood. The tie between child and father comes to his vision in an aspect new and very wonderful. What the boy had written down as domination, the man clarifies and adores. He becomes reverent and filial, and his heart overflows with humility and gratitude. The old prayer of his boyhood is illuminated and takes on new meaning in the term " Father."

> Much that at first, in deed and word,
> Was simply and sufficiently expressed
> Had grown (or else my soul had grown to match,
> Fed through such years, familiar with such light)
> To new significance and fresh result;
> What first was guessed as points I now know as stars.
>
> —*Robert Browning.*

And what of God, great, eternal, unfathomable? Do you believe he pauses in his large designs and movements to care for the tiny bits of his creation? Why, the earth is one of the smallest of the planets, and possibly man ranks very low in the Creator's intelligences. Is it likely that the Creator gives thought to him?

In reply, let us contemplate the exquisite balancings of creation—the wonderful adaptation of each creature to its environment, the careful provision made and maintained against the needs and for the emergencies of the tiniest insect that "hums and sings in the scum and mud of things." Why, the most superficial study of God in nature must convince us that God's providential oversight of his creation is all-pervasive and actively directing. He who hears the weakest hum in the great diapason of nature may be trusted to listen to the cry of a human soul and to bring it relief out of his vast storehouses.

Among the many adaptations of creation we must surely count the adaptation of spirit to spirit in prayer. No doubt there has always been provision made for the effect of prayer upon the visible universe. The occult influence of spirit upon spirit is one of the commonest phenomena

of human experience. It exists in every life and manifests itself in various ways. Is it then unbelievable that the great Master Spirit comes close to our spirit—so near, and with guiding so clear, that nothing physical can compare with it? This direct, vital, personal contact of the Divine Spirit with man's human spirit is our warrant for daily prayer.

> Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet—
> Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and feet.

Who Art in Heaven

To the tender and meaningful words "Our Father," the Lord added another phrase which is pregnant. Note the tense of the verb—"art"—not a Father that once was; not a Father yet to be manifested; but a Father who now is, a living, abiding, palpitant presence.

"Who art in heaven." How supporting to thought is a sense of locality. We are so glad to have this Father localized and made definite to our feeble mortal conception. Without some visible emblem for the mind to dwell upon and so

make manifest the spiritual conception, human understanding would be bewildered in the thought of God.

We must pause a moment here to admire the skill of Jehovah in the very difficult undertaking of revealing God's embodiment in a definite home, without so materializing that home as to degrade our spiritual aspiration for it.

" In heaven." We never quite get away from our childish ideas of the abiding-place of God. Our Lord said nothing of what it is or where it is, or what it looks like. John tried to describe it to us, and failed utterly. Paul endeavored to lift us up to his radiant vision of it, but was obliged to use only glittering generalities in the noble words, " Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

But the boundless extent of blue which covers the earth, the pure light with which it is filled by day and the golden magnificence which besprinkles it by night, the quietness and repose of the heavens, their orderliness and beauty, their harmony and sense of infinity—these fill man's earliest conscious thought with reverence and

peace, and seem fit symbols of God's majesty and power, so that even the little ones look up into the blue dome and believe it is God's house; and we never fully get away from that. This innate sense of some definite place where abide the better things which the soul conceives but finds nowhere on earth—this we call heaven.

Where is heaven? Where is the soul in the human body? Can you locate it? If you can not, do you deny that it exists? It is told in Scripture that "the heavens cannot contain God, yet he is not very far from any one of us." In heaven—in the seat of dominion. In the center of power. In the laboratory of creative force. What is not possible in such a place?

"Our Father, who art in heaven." This phrasing is placed in the forefront of the Lord's Prayer to impress upon us that God is not to be sought in any material mood of the soul; but that a man must disrobe himself of everything earthly, as did the high priest of old, and garment himself with holy garments if he would enter that holy of holies—prayer.

Such souls vanish the earth,
But they leave behind
A voice that wakes the ages.

The First Petition

"Hallowed be Thy name" is called the first petition of the Lord's Prayer. But is it a petition? May it not be that it is simply an affirmation at the threshold of prayer, to guard us against any unseemly familiarity with God? May it not be intended to warn men to put the shoes from off their feet, for the place whereinto they have come is holy ground. First recognize the holiness of the Presence, and then seek that this holiness be felt by the one who prays. It guards against the tendency to regard prayer as a daily rite, to be gotten over quickly and done with. Prayer is fellowship with God. It is being strengthened for the day by daily communion, as the body is strengthened by daily food.

The verb to hallow means to make holy, to set apart, to separate. This Name is to be set apart in the heart as a holy thing, an inspiration, a standard. Let not your daily prayer be a begging plaint for material good, as too often it is; but here, in the closet, in the quiet sanctuary hour, learn the mastery of life and life's vexing details through contemplating things of the spirit. Only

so can you refresh your soul and fit it for its daily encounters.

In springing out of bed with this thought of glorifying God, you but follow all the works of creation.

> Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,
> Does his Creator's power display,
> And publishes, to every land,
> The work of an Almighty hand.
>
> Soon as the evening shades prevail,
> The moon takes up the wondrous tale;
> And nightly, to the list'ning earth,
> Repeats the story of her birth:—
>
> Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
> And all the planets in their turn,
> Confirm the tidings, as they roll,
> And spread the truth from pole to pole.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Forever singing, as they shine,—
> "The hand that made us is divine."

"Hallowed be Thy name." Is this truly the first petition of thy morning prayer? The earliest glad, upspringing desire of thy heart? If so, thou hast entered the blessed life of consecration, the Spirit-filled life, where is always quiet and peace and there are no perplexities of the day. It is the friendly dugout in the tumultuous battle-field.

The Second Petition

"Thy kingdom come" is the next petition of this model set us by our Lord for prayer.

In nothing did Jesus Christ labor more untiringly than in effort to place before human thought right conceptions of God's kingdom. He labored to present the idea at every angle. The kingdom was like mustard-seed for littleness in its beginnings; therefore no one need be discouraged if in his own heart the beginning seemed to be small. It was like leaven in its strange power to break down surrounding foreign elements; therefore no one need be anxious as to the results of its coming—even if results seemed slow in appearing. It was like hidden treasure, so unexpectedly might one come upon it. It was like a pearl of great price, so wise would it be for a man to resign everything he held dear in order to acquire possession of it. This kingdom is not a geographical area or a political one. It is not in the Jewish nation or in any empire. It has no visible ruler, but is ever pervaded by a universal omniscient King.

Our Lord laid great stress upon man's making

this kingdom the highest pursuit of his existence. All the other petitions of the prayer are interlocked in its call. The first three urge its immediate appearance: the last three beg that all human hindrances—especially those within ourselves—be removed, as cobblestones, from the path of its coming. In his insistence upon the desirability of the coming of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, our Lord cried: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and *all other things shall be added unto you.*" It is a promise. It is a reward. Seek *first* the kingdom of heaven and its type of righteousness, and all anxiety about other things—material things, spiritual things, financial things—may cease.

"Thy kingdom come!" When this prayer of our Lord was put forward, God's kingdom on earth was hopelessly small. A few simple folk, mostly fisherfolk; a few Israelites who were waiting for the consolation of Israel; a few isolated and frightened men and women meeting daily in an upper chamber to keep in remembrance the expected kingdom—only half realizing what it meant. Who could possibly predict that by reason of the constant petitions of that simple prayer, handed down from father to son through

the ages, the little germ of a kingdom then set up would have become today, without the employment of either arms or statecraft, a great nation, with followers within every nation of the earth; that kings and emperors would do it reverence; that leaders of men would be its leaders; that its tenets would inflame the hearts of millions of men to go out and do battle, that this kingdom of heaven should not have its spiritual laws either betrayed or outraged?

Thy kingdom come! Did you expect it to come with no cost? Has not every step of its advance been marked with broken bodies and blood poured out, and the crusaders' cross. And it may come to *you* with cost. Be of good courage. He has passed this way before you. Remember his words, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

The Third Petition

"Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven." This is the third petition. As construed by many, it is really only a part of the preceding petition, they are one. When the third

petition is deeply felt and sincerely prayed, it fulfils the ideal of all prayer. When a man can truly cry, "Thy will, O God, be done, in me, and by me, and through me, wherever it leads and whatever it costs," he has made full consecration of himself and his possessions and his powers to God. Do you dare to pray it? It may call for isolation, loss, cross, pain, poverty, death. Pray it, if you can. It is the greatest of all prayers; but it cuts a clean swath through selfishness, untruth, gossip, human passions of all degrees.

At the base of prayer is a sense of a personal relation with God. The one who prays wishes to do and to have things which he desires. He probably begins by asking for very cheap things—power and wealth and goods of all kinds—the things that clog the spirit and clutter the body. If he is a child of God, some time this changes. He has observed children who receive from earthly parents everything they desire, and he has discovered that this is usually the very worst thing possible for the child. He concludes that his own judgment as to his own needs may be, like the child's, not wise. He knows that he is apt to pray to be exempted from everything that would bring suffering or loss to him, and to be

endowed with everything that could make him comfortable and happy. If a larger view comes to him, it teaches him that these would be the worst things possible for him. The unceasing building up of character is not provided with stepping-stones but with stumbling-blocks. Facing issues began in Eden, and if Eve had been loyal to her highest, the world would have had a different ending. Innocence is not righteousness. Righteousness comes from temptation, and struggle, and failure, and—victory.

It may well be that our heavenly Father knows that we need the discipline, the storms, the rough winds which fix the rootages of character and firm them in the soil for deeper growth and larger endurance. He may know that sorrow and losses and crosses are just the things we need; that dear ties should be severed; that want should stalk hand-in-hand with us and lead us to Christ.

Then why pray? What is the lesson of the third petition? It is that God will not let our partial knowledge, our human cravings, decide our fate; that he will not heed us and send what would eventuate in disaster to our growth, simply because we beg for it. The petition confides all to God's perfect knowledge and accepts in simple

trust whatever his larger judgment gives as a substitute for our ignorant asking. This double prayer is the one our Lord himself used in his hour of agony on the cross. He said: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; but if it may not pass except I drink it, thy will be done."

"As it is done in heaven." How is God's will done in heaven? Go out at night and look up at the vast blue cup-shaped dome that covers the earth, and ask the suns and systems which silently revolve in their harmonious orbits how God's will is done in heaven. "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." They will answer you that God's will is done gladly, quickly, faithfully, continuously.

But the obedience of nature is the blind obedience of law. The Creator chose to differentiate man from the other creatures by endowing him with an imperial power of choice. God's ideal best includes a creature with a free will. Love outranks obedience. The joy of a gift is the voluntariness of it. A man shut within the stone walls of a penitentiary cannot commit any outrageous sin against the commonwealth, but no one can think he is at his ideal best. His virtues are negative. But when man is a free agent his

virtues become kingly. He is master of his own destiny. The lower animals have no volition of their own. Their lives and movements are modified for them by the higher intelligences who own them and may change their environment. But man is free and responsible. He may even put himself out of harmony with the laws of God. He may hinder and delay the coming of the kingdom of heaven on earth, for which Jesus prayed. If God, like the prison-keeper, hindered him from the possibility of wrong-doing, he would be no better than a brute, and conformity to God's will would have no value in God's sight.

What would happen if every human should really desire to have God's will a constituent part of his daily life and walk? The whole structure of modern society would be changed. Oppression would cease; despair would rise from its ashes and put on the beautiful garments; economy and efficiency would be acts, not words; no standing armies; no peace councils; no glut of riches in one place and starving children in another; no labor troubles; no white slavery; a whole series of professions would cease to be—police courts, prisons, etc. The Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount would be man's working principle.

This is yet to come, and it will come, through the dynamic force of the Lord's Prayer. "Pray, believing that ye shall receive, and *it shall be done for you.*"

The Fourth Petition

"Give us this day our daily bread" is the fourth petition of this wonderful prayer. Most persons think of it as the first and most important. All that went before, we are apt to think, belongs to the mysteries of the spirit and does not touch our vital, bodily needs. I think that sometimes we are willing to run glibly through the first three—without trying to fathom their meaning or God's purpose in commanding them—hoping thereby to bargain with the Lord for a prompt answer to the next four—daily bread, forgiveness for favorite sins, freedom from temptation, deliverance from evil. We slyly ask ourselves, Why should I be told to honor God's name, pray for his kingdom to come and his will to be done on earth, when my great cry, my imperative need is for plenty of bread and the things the word bread stands for? So we mentally invert the petitions, treating lightly and unthoughtfully

those upon which our Lord laid greatest stress, but urging strongly the four which deal with our fully recognized needs.

But the first three petitions are fundamental, and the others are built upon them. The pressing need of humanity is not bread and the material things implied thereby, but it is a great vision of the invisible things. Food, shelter, clothing, luxuries—these are the incidents of life, the by-products, the impedimenta. They are all left behind when man leaves life.

The first word of this prayer is "Father." Think of God as a child thinks of its father, who joyfully and abundantly supplies his needs, even before the child is conscious of having any need. We mistake the nature of prayer if we assume that prayer is given us whereby to advise Almighty God of his functions, or to remind him that he is not doing his duty by us in our time of need or desire. Do not presume that God will be able to govern his world better because of your prayer. Commune with him. Offer up your problems and sorrows to his tender and listening ear; then patiently wait for him to speak and advise. This precious human petition is our warrant for telling our Father of our human hunger, and for

looking to him for comprehension and sympathy in the daily burdens which bear so heavily.

" Your Father knoweth that you have need of these things " is Christ's tender supplement to this petition. " Behold the birds of heaven, ye heirs of heaven," writes Martin Luther. " God feedeth them. They neither sow nor reap. The Householder of the Universe hath untold stores garnered for all that lack and suffer hunger." Are ye not of much more value than many sparrows? Have you not been told by Jesus Christ himself that the very hairs of your head are numbered?

Go to the forest, O ye of little faith, and front the essential facts of the life there. Behold with amazement the myriad and varied messengers which are entrusted with food and shelter and protection for all God's creatures, both the most atomic creatures and the most gigantic. Let nature be a schoolmaster to bring you to faith in your Father's abounding provision and prevision. To the creatures he is Creator: for you he adds the compassionate term " Father." Has that no significance to you?

Now let us analyze this marvelous petition, taking each word separately and getting from each all that it means to us.

"Give us this day our daily bread." *Give.* It is a gift then! Why, we thought we had earned it, or invented it. No. Unless the Father should regulate the sun and the dew and the hidden, microscopic forces at work in nature, man could never get his bread. Unless God withheld the storms and the floods and the belching volcanoes, man could never preserve his garnered stores. Sometimes, in limited areas, these fires or floods are let loose for a season, and man is taught through terror what he has not learned through love, of the power of the Almighty. Then let us, in making our prayer,

> Kiss the nethermost
> Hem of his garment,
> Lowly inclining
> In infantine awe.
>
> —*Goethe.*

"Give!" Is it a gift? Yes, it is. Man may take the products of the earth, combine, mold, and subject them to his will, but he cannot create one atom of the life-principle. This is stored in the matrix of the earth and climbs to the light in plants and flowers. The secret of genesis is with God and remains with God, so that if he withholds the life-tides no man can have his daily

bread. The miracle of Elijah's ravens was more unusual but not greater.

In this fourth petition we learn that the prayer for bread is not solely intended for poverty-stricken people; but that bread and the conditions for procuring bread are as truly a gift to the rich as to the poor, to Andrew Carnegie the multi-millionaire, as to Andrew Carnegie, the weaver's lad emigrating to America with all his possessions strapped to his back. For back of industry and skill are the sun and the dew. And back of these is God, who alone crowns industry and diligence with success.

Though daily bread is a gift, we are nowhere warranted in making petition a substitute for intelligence and work. We must cooperate with God in answering our own prayers. This is done by effective planning and thought. He no more will run our ships, or engineer our railways, by the simple means of prayer than an earthly father will, or can, study his little boy's lesson for him because the boy wishes to play instead of studying. The boy must do for himself all he has power to do, or he gets no growth. The father's "No" in such a case is really an answer to the boy's desire to become a good scholar, though the

boy does not see it so. Development must come through discipline; and prayers, unanswered to our mortal eyes, are often God's tenderest and most comprehending replies to the best wishes of our hearts, if only we knew it. Rabindranath Tagore, the Bengali poet, says: "My desires are many and my cry is pitiful, but ever thou didst save me by hard refusals; and this strong mercy has been wrought into my life through and through." The form of our petition may be denied, but the substance granted. Ah, if we could only foresee what consequences would follow if God would grant the desire for which we cry out to him, how differently we would pray! Remember,

> More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of;

Prayer moves the Hand which moves the world.

"Us" is the next word in the third petition. It keeps up the ideal of brotherhood. Us of the unquiet heart who toil that others may luxuriate; us, children of one Father, some highly cultured, some very deficient in skill or wit; us who sin; us who are of the great army of the sinned-against; us who employ and us who are em-

ployed! In the mystic brotherhood in which Jesus Christ is the Beloved Son and the Elder Brother we beg for daily bread.

"This day" is the next phrasing. It is deft phrasing. Daily supply for daily needs is all we are warranted in asking for. All anxious, carking care for tomorrow and its needs is to be left with God. Have you noticed that it is almost never today's necessities that burden? It is some tormenting anxiety about tomorrow. The black, bitter, and unendurable sorrow which shadows our present is our future. Why not, says Christ, leave tomorrow's bread for tomorrow's day, and so halve your care? Anxiety for the morrow is not helpful to the worker nor conducive to good work. It is not psychologically wise. It is not conducive to honesty, nor to that joyous trust which carries many a man over a rough pathway.

So fear nothing, dear heart. Work today to the full strength of today's requirements; pray today for the full supply of today's needs; trust God today for tomorrow's sure supplies. Tomorrow, work again, pray again, trust again. Those are your orders. In Philippians 4 : 19 read, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." This has

been called " The Christian's Check-book." The banker is " my God "; the promise to pay is " shall supply "; the amount to draw is " all you need "; the guaranty is " according to the bank's riches "; the location of bank and banker is " in glory "; the indorser is " Christ Jesus."

" Our daily bread." Of all the myriad demands which the body makes upon our attention the most imperious and irresistible is hunger. When hunger dominates, every other appetite stands aside. It has made men forget that they were men and act as if they were jungle beasts. Hunger is nature's call for body-building material, just as brick or mortar is the builder's call. It was very thoughtful of our Lord to pause and put such a petition in the very center of prayer.

How near famine always is! A year of blight, of war, of insect ravages, of freezing weather, of burning suns that shrivel and scorch, of floods or drought—and the dread thing has come. He could, but fortunately the God of the harvest does not, permit these disasters to come universally. Once he did, but the colorful bow in the cloud often recalls his promise that it shall not occur again. We hear of local famines—now in Ireland, now in India, now in Japan. But they are

local, not universal, and the Father has provided that help shall even there be brought in times of stress. Man, unwittingly guided by Providence, is sent as God's agent to secure a ration balance where the supply has failed. For his own commercial ends, man constructs vessels, invents new and swifter vehicles of transportation, labors across mountains and over seas; under steam and sail he travels day and night that he may be God's minister to carry bread to the eater and seed to the sower. Wherever there is a surplus of any commodity he is led to pick it up and carry it to some locality where it is lacking, unconsciously answering with God man's Fourth Petition. Thus food and the empowering conditions for gathering and distributing it are gifts of the Father, who bids you pray, " Give us this day our daily bread."

" He sendeth forth his commandment upon the earth, and filleth man with the finest of the wheat. He giveth food to all flesh."

" Our "; worked for, paid for, earned by our own exertions, not the bread of charity, handed out to idle and lazy people. *Our own portion of thy bounteous store* is what the petition asks for. Is it manna we need? Is it the ministry of

ravens? Is it a sheet full of four-footed beasts, tied up with a great lesson? We do not know. Mete it out to us, Our Father, just as thou seest best.

"Daily"; not intermittent. Not impermanent. Not a feast today and a fast tomorrow. Not opportunity to earn for one period, and idleness the next. But daily. Our Lord well knew the value of the small, constant, well-earned income rather than the fitful donation or the doubtful blessing of inherited wealth. "Daily" leaves the future in God's hands. Where could it better be left?

"Bread"; a word for a type; the universal food; the staff of life. How much bread? The quantity is not to be stated. Leave that with the Father who alone knows what demands are to be made this day upon your strength or how far afield you are to be carried.

Yes, leave it with him.
The lilies all do
  And they grow.
They grow in the sun
And they grow in the dew;
  Yes, they grow.

How much bread? None, for purposes of ostentation. His son, Andrew Carnegie, may be

entrusted with many millions, and use it for God's glory: his Son, Jesus Christ, may have nowhere to lay his head and may need to go hungry for forty days and forty nights, also for God's glory and his brother man's good.

The Fifth Petition

"Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" is the fifth petition. Luke has it, "Forgive us our *sins*"—sins, those steady pressures which sap the foundations of character and open the sluices for deepening degeneracy; those turbulent assaults of evil which drag the worst out of us, to curse the earth. Matthew speaks of them as *debts,* as if, so long as they exist, we carry some unfulfilled obligation, some mortgage which eats while we sleep, and weights our already overweighted lives, cutting the sinews of endeavor. There are few who would not utter this prayer for forgiveness from the debt, the Nemesis, of sin; from its swift, physical punishment—the decrepit body of the lustful sinner; the anxious hours of the forger; the haunting specter of the murderer. Tetzel ministered to that phase

of human nature when he devised the sale of "indulgences."

But Luke goes deeper than the outside and calls them "sins"—things done while conscience slept; assaults against the finer fabric of our own souls, against our pure neighbor, against the intent of God; dear sins which we know to be eating our purpose, but which are so dear we cannot give them up; sins that are slowly but surely burning up the divine within us and entailing dire results upon our unborn offspring. We do not really want, or intend, to give up the sins. They are so enchanting, so dominating. We do pray to be delivered from the penalty of them.

But nowhere is there any promise of escape from penalty. There is a promise of conditions for repair, but not while the sin is continuing. The moment it ceases of our own volition, that moment the work of repair is set up. The soul begins to cast off old tissues and the reserves stored up in God's pharmacopœia begin to take their place. There is no doubt that the great Creator has provided moral therapeutics as well as physical; and that in nature are forces for help as well as for hurt.

What sins have I on my conscience? Opportunities let slip; little kindnesses undone; beloved ones—now, alas, out of my poor reach—unministered to, or ministered to grudgingly, or misunderstood? Sins of the tongue, gossip; sins of cowardice, lying, failing to stand by a friend; sins such as self-seeking at some other one's cost; disloyalty in times of crises, when a little loyalty would have counted. Are any of these your sins? Or, have you still others?

Have you known Christ and not shown him? There were those who looked to you for a standard. Have they failed because you failed? Has the whole average ebbed because of your lack?

Forgiveness may set our feet in new paths; but our beloved one whom we so neglected or disobeyed or misunderstood is out of our reach; and that soul who looked to us for inspiration and the courage to go on, has stranded on the rocks and disappeared from our ken. So we know that forgiveness from sin does not include remission of penalty, though it does bring renewal and hope for the future and another chance in our wasted lives.

Do you ask how can forgiveness come, when back of your life is such wreckage? Our Lord's

answer is this: "Let the dead bury their dead"; but "come thou and follow me." Daniel tells us that "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him." It was never on the Father's heart not to forgive; but there are hearts so full of anger, hate, lust, selfness, that they cannot receive forgiveness. The vessel is full of other emotions, and forgiveness has no place. This is what is meant by the word *as*—"As we forgive those who trespass against us." If a vessel is full, it must be emptied before another thing can be put into it. If we are full of anger, malice, gossip, lust, we have no room for forgiveness, and we stand in the way of God's own power to forgive. The responsibility is with us, not with God. Until we have the temper which can forgive those who have sinned against us, we have not the spirit which can be forgiven.

> Oh, may I join the choir invisible
> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence.
>
> —*George Eliot.*

The Fifth Petition, paralleling the Fifth Commandment, is the one petition on which our Lord

himself made comment. He first phrased his comment in the positive and then in the negative form, as if to leave no doubt of his intent or its emphasis. He said: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Jesus recurred again and again to this subject of forgiveness, going over it at many angles, as if to make it very clear what man's duty is in the matter. He said, in effect, that forgiveness is two-edged and cuts both ways. The one who has sinned must repent. The one who is sinned against must forgive. "*If he repent,* forgive him. If he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." To repent and to say so is the duty of the offender: to forgive and to say so is the duty of the one offended against. If the man who offends shows no sign of repentance, it becomes the other's duty, our Lord tells us, to go and "tell him his fault between thee and him alone." He is not to go and tell others his fault, nor to embalm it in his own breast against some fateful day, nor to avenge it. Quietly, tenderly, in a spirit of real

forgiveness, he must go to his offender, when he is alone, and state his grievance. If the offender persists in refusal to repent, our Lord gives direct permission to us to withdraw from him entirely and let him be to us thereafter "as an heathen man." But even then, there is no permission for revenge of any degree. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

From this we see that Godlike forgiveness does not commit us to passive submission to continual insult. What it does charge upon us is not to meet evil with evil, but to remain in a permanent mood to forgive, should the offender repent and say so. Our Lord knew the happy effect that must arise from the quiet, heroic interview between man and man, alone. He appreciated the effect likely to follow when a man is compelled to formulate in tangible words just what has been his brother's offense. Differences are apt to scatter like a morning cloud before such treatment.

The lesson is that forgiveness, like the life-blood of the heart, must be a warm, surging tide, flooding the whole being, carrying away old and useless issues and renewing the inner man with its regenerating purity. He who is sinned against has no child's task.

In contemplating this Fifth Petition one must feel confronted with the thought that Christianity is the release of a new power into the world, transforming outward acts into vital principles, superseding the old law of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." If men everywhere had been practising the teachings of the Lord's Prayer there would never have been a world war. The world war was God's permission, but man's creation.

The Sixth Petition

"Lead us not into temptation" is the next petition. Men are inclined to regard it as very paradoxical. With great impertinence they have endeavored to explain it away, to change its phraseology, to read a new meaning into it. They have insinuated that a different wording would bring out its meaning more clearly, and they have taken liberties with the translation. They have written it, "Let us not into temptation," "Leave us not in our temptation," "Abandon us not in the time of temptation," etc. But the evangelist taking it from our Lord's mouth wrote, "*Lead* us not into temptation." This asserts with au-

thority that temptation is no accident, but a part of God's eternal plan—a step upward in growth.

The self-appointed interpreters ask, "Would God lead man into temptation?" In Matthew 4 we read, "Then was Jesus *led* up into the wilderness"—what for? "to be tempted of the devil." Did you think wildernesses and temptations and devils are parts of the universe over which God has no control? Not so. They are part of the divine scheme of things. "THEN." When? The closing verses of the preceding chapter read: "Jesus, when he was baptized . . . saw the Spirit of God descending upon him . . . and lo, a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It has been well said that God knows whom he can trust to suffer. He could trust Jesus Christ. If you are being assailed, tormented, urged to doubt God, to test him and reject him if he does not come up to your expectations; if you have been baptized—and tempted; approved of God in a glorious vision—and handed over to Satan; if you have had God's inaugural seal upon your forehead, and then have been driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, my brethren, count it all joy, for such things work to the

maturing and cleansing of your souls and are tokens of your adoption into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. " When the Lord puts in the plowshare, he means a crop."

Many a fact arises in the psychical processes of human education which cannot be accounted for by human pedagogy. The normal child advances to manhood through strange and seemingly cruel experiences. His will is curbed and thwarted by his parents; his mind is chastened and disciplined by his schoolmasters; his physical body gets many a blow from his fellow students and his athletic trainers. Even after manhood has arrived he can reach leadership only through much misunderstanding, much renunciation, and many blasted hopes. He feels his strength come, not by coddling, but by temptations and opposing forces. When, in sorrows and losses, the widest and tenderest human sympathy comes to bless and refresh him, he feels that he was born into it through a travail which almost tempted him to doubt the existence of God.

So being *led* into temptation is not a metaphysical quibble, an unusual experience which a man may resent and call God to account for. Resisting temptation is the manly art of reaching strength,

power, divinity. Plato calls temptation a midwife who has delivered many a giant. Doctor Abbott likens it to a skilful general who wins by massing forces where the enemy is weakest.

When Jehovah purposed to establish a kingdom of righteousness upon the earth, he instituted a whole tragedy of temptations. Mary, about to become the mother of the Saviour, was threatened with being "put away privily" for adultery; Jesus Christ, fresh from baptismal waters, was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; Paul was branded on the body with "the marks of the Lord Jesus"; the infant church was not, as might have been expected, nourished and nursed like a new-born babe, but it was persecuted, scattered, and tempted.

So there must be some great blessing in temptation. It is to the soul what storms are to the tree, firming its roots deeper in the soil; or what the blizzard is to the lazy and fetid atmosphere, carrying away its germ-laden haze. Soldiers in the world war tell us that the hour which makes heroes out of men is not the glorious hour of battle, when trumpets blare and bullets whiz and the crash of battle and the madness of blood are on, but it is the quiet hour in the trenches

when the leader orders inaction, and the temptation is strong to transgress, to rush to action and victory—the hour of self-restraint, and nerving up, and simple obedience. These are the lessons of the trenches. Is it possible that war is God's training-camp, and that the coming of the kingdom reaches a progression through a strange mobilization of forces which are invisible to us, but which persistently draw one reluctant nation after another into the seething caldron? "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Take from man the possibility of being tempted, and you will take all the virtue from his goodness.

We have in our Lord's wilderness experience a great pattern of how to deal with temptation. The record is, "He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan." What subtle forms of temptation Satan offered him during most of those days we are not told. It is at their close that our narrative takes up the story of the

spent Christ, faint with the double burden of hunger and resistance when Satan attacked him on a lower plane. You, minister of God; you, child of God; have you any experience answering to this? Has some period of special vision of the descending Spirit been swiftly followed by some strong temptation to evil? Do not be discouraged. Your Master has trod the way before you. Moses, Job, Elijah, Paul, in their black periods of isolation and discouragement, were not more surely under the Father's watchful eyes than are you in this, your lesser darkness. It seems from the narrative that temptations were sent to these men because they were to be chosen tools which must be forged in the furnace and tempered on the anvil. Is it possible that you are chosen to be such a tool? Do not fall into doubt when your temptations are many, but when they are few. The word trial means test. Temptation implies a measure of worthiness.

For forty days in the wilderness our Lord faced and withstood the impact of spirit against spirit in some way unknown to us, not recorded for us, since his temptations were to meet emergencies not to be a part of our human experiences. At their close Satan came. Then began the sym-

bolization of our own trials—for at some time and in some guise the doors of every man's soul are similarly assaulted by Satan, and they must be either barred, or opened, from within. How good to feel that the Master went through every phase of our temptations and knows well the force of the impact. To poor, tempted, failing Peter he said, "Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." What meaning has this for thee, O thou tempted and failing one?

In this series of temptations which were directed against the typical man by Satan in the wilderness, we get Satan's view-point of what are man's weak spots, his most easily assailable points. The list is not very flattering to human nature. Here it is: Hunger for bread, that is really made of stones; joy in a display of power; barter of a man's soul for worldly glories. The list is short, but pregnant. And yet these are universal temptations. In one form or another they attack the whole human family and lie at the root of its sins and follies. They are what Satan has to offer you in exchange for worshiping him.

"The kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof!" Does Satan then own the kingdoms of

the world? And what is the glory thereof? Where is the glory of Egypt? Of Assyria? Of ancient Greece? Of ancient Rome? And what is the glory thereof, which Satan so proudly offers as bait for souls? In his "Letters to the Clergy" John Ruskin says: "In modern times the first aim of all so-called Christian parents is to place their children in circumstances where the temptations (which they are apt to call 'opportunities') may be as great and as many as possible; where the sight and promise of 'all these things' within Satan's gift may be brilliantly near; and where the act of 'falling down to worship' may be partly concealed by the shelter, and partly excused as involuntary by the presence, of the concurrent crowd."

Have you ever known a mother who, herself yearning after God, has missed complete self-surrender and consecration because she could not resist the temptation to offer her daughters on the altar of Mammon? Ruskin further says that no man can truthfully and honestly ask to be delivered from temptation unless he has, himself, honestly and faithfully determined to do the best he can—and all he can—to keep out of it. "The devil tempts us not—'tis we tempt him."

How did the Symbolic Man meet his temptations? If the means he used were derived wholly from his God power we need not try to imitate them. But if they were of such a nature that any purposeful human really wishing and intending to overcome a temptation might use them, then we may suppose Jesus Christ's methods were noted down as an example for us in our emergencies.

Satan knew that the Son of God was also Son of man, possessing human passions and appetites. Once, homesick for a home and its sweetness, its quiet and tenderness, its love-life, Jesus cried out: "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head!"

You homeless one, whose family and friends lie in the churchyard, who are battered about in rooming-houses and boarding-houses, sick and anxious and laid-by, do not suppose that our Lord does not feel for you, think of you, long to come to you in your sorrows and temptations. He knows the way you go and the reasons of its long, rocky steep—and where it leads. "And thou shalt know hereafter."

I often think of that first month of Christ's lonely temptation in the wilderness, when Satan

was weaving his web or creating his atmosphere of temptation. Where were his blows directed? Was it against physical desires—those cravings of the body which work mischief with both body and soul, and which spread mischief? Possibly. The representative man was tempted in all the points that man must be tempted through. Believe it, young man, do not think it strange concerning this fiery trial that comes to you, as though some strange thing happened to you alone. Your Master has passed on before you, and he will give you grace to conquer.

It may be, too, that the assaults of those first days were directed to some spiritual essence within the man—something which we have only vaguely dreamed, but something which enters invisibly into our framework and influences our daily living. We pass them by with a sneer, perhaps, and call them the occult things.

We get this great lesson from the wilderness experience: Satan knows our weaker moments, our testing-times, when and where to put the pressures. At the close of forty fast-days Christ's most pressing sensation was hunger. His spent flesh called out for body-building stuff, and overbore his fainting spirit. Satan recog-

nized this as his line of least resistance. In Satan's full quiver was a crafty missile that he often uses even at this day—sarcasm. "What!" he cried, "a God, and hungry? Preposterous! If you are really God, you need not be hungry. Your extremity is your opportunity, Man. Now is the time to prove your Godhood. A man has to live, and the more important the man, the greater the necessity for his living, even though he must temporarily do things he would not ordinarily approve. Do not sacrifice your life at its very threshold for some overstrained ideal. Make bread out of the stones at your feet; eat and live. God is probably busy elsewhere in his vast creation, and he knows you have the power to do the thing that will bring the necessary present help."

Has any temptation similar to this come to you? Have you ever had doubts of the providing care of your Father? Have you come to the temptation to secure for yourself by forbidden methods the things which you crave but which were withheld from you. Have you accepted doubtful occupations when others, which your conscience approved, would not furnish the money you thought to be a necessity for you and

your family? Has your body stolen forbidden pleasures, with no regard for the things of the spirit? Have you accepted Sunday work with a sullen attitude toward God who did not provide week-day work that was equally remunerative? What unexpected, unprepared-for encounter have you had with Satan in some wilderness of your soul? And how have you met it?

How did Jesus meet temptation? Is his method open to you?

Confident in the providings of the Father, though still fainting with hunger, he replied to Satan: "*It is written,* Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Where was this written? Read the Eighth Chapter of Deuteronomy, where Moses rehearses another wilderness experience. He says: "He fed thee with manna . . . that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only. . . Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years." Read the entire chapter. Probably the Lord had been thinking over that wonderful story and, maybe too, another miracle-story—the story of Elijah fed by the ravens—the manna, and the quails, and the rock that became a spring, and the

forty years' wanderings may have brought solid comfort and assurance to the famished human. To Satan he said, practically: "It is not essential that man should eat and live, if God wills otherwise. It is essential that he should trust and obey. I am in my Father's hands. His will is mine."

Is this method of Christ open to you? Can you say, "Thy will be done by me and in me and through me, wherever it calls me and through whatever paths"? Thank God, in every age and among every race of Christianized men, there have been men and women who held life cheap and duty dear. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; . . they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Destitute, afflicted, tormented. That is one half of the story of these heroes of duty. The other half reads thus: "I beheld, and lo, a great multitude . . . stood before the throne, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. . . And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation. . . Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple. . . They shall hunger no more, neither

thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The first temptation passed. Faith won the day. *"It is written"* is a great reply from man to Satan. Keep close to the written law of the Lord if you would have your munitions factory well stored against the day of battle.

Satan's second temptation was more subtle, and was aimed at a higher point. It was to assail Christ's spirit, no longer his bodily lusts and cravings. Satan is not easily discouraged, and for some reason, unknown to us, he had been entrusted for the season with the body of Christ. Sweeping through space over the mountaintop, the devil carried the spent Son of man to the holy city, to Jerusalem, the goal of every pious Jew's noblest aspirations. Here, on a pinnacle of the temple, which was to every Jew full of spiritual symbols and alive with the memory of God's provision for his own in times of emergency, Satan intended to arouse a fanatical belief in the miraculous, and to see the enthused young man spring into the luminous air in a rapture of frenzy

and of disobedience to the laws of nature, and be dashed to death.

It was as if the tempter said: "Your answer was admirable, and your trust in God is well founded. I too remember the manna and the quails and the cruse of oil, and I honor the sublime faith you so beautifully illustrate. Now is your opportunity. Come, cast yourself headlong from this glorious height, and rise, unharmed, before the wondering eyes of the worshiping multitude. So shall you accomplish in one brilliant *coup* the things which, in God's slow circuit, would require three shameful years of self-denial—with Gethsemane and Calvary at their close. You say 'It is written' and you say well. It is written also: 'He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.'"

Has any experience corresponding to this second temptation come to you? Any temptation to aspire to something better than God has decreed for you? To take some short cut into wealth or honors, and trust to a miracle to keep you from the consequences of your transgression? Have you ever set pious little snares

to test God's promises and vindicate to yourself your secret unbelief in them?

Our Lord does not seem to have had a very varied method of resisting a temptation. He simply used the same old answer—"It is written." The law of God as set down in the Scriptures was good enough for him. When once he had said to himself, "It is God's law," that was sufficient. In his short journey through human life God's laws were compass, chart, and steering-wheel for him. Are they for you?

Satan's last temptation—the temptation to sell heaven for the world, the grandeur of the soul for the gaud of the body—is essentially human. Twenty centuries have passed since first he used it, but it has not lost its force. It is still one of the bases of everything evil on earth, and it is still a favorite weapon with the devil. Christ's humanity must, through long contest, have been much in the ascendency for Satan to attempt such a petty experiment. With magic power he unrolled before the Lord all of the kingdoms of the world and all the glory of them; and then he said, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." All the world and the glory of the world! Its pomp and its paste and

its short-lived, petty triumphs! When eyes are clear and hearts are true, how foolish they seem —what tinsel! When the world war came, how quickly they were sponged off the slate!

What was our Lord's reply, and could it be our reply to a similar temptation? He did not argue the matter. He was not very courteous. He said, brusquely enough: "Get thee behind me, Satan. It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Do not be too courteous to a temptation. Do not argue or explain. Call a spade a spade; Satan, Satan; hell, hell; have a fundamental honesty in dealing with facts, even if that method seems to be elemental, crude, and unpopular. Put an end to temptation, not by toying with it, but by holding firmly to the "written" word.

"Then the devil leaveth him." How suggestive! "And behold, angels came and ministered unto him." If you would know the sweet ministry of angels, you must first pass through the black gates of temptation. Therefore you had better be panoplied with the inflexible, supreme, written word of God.

Faith takes man out of servitude
Into freedom.

The Seventh Petition

Out from the Sixth Petition comes naturally the Seventh. It is the cry of a heart which has known the power of temptation, and knowing it, knows also its own utter helplessness. When a man calls out, "Deliver me!" it is a sure token that he feels unable to render self-aid if unsupported. His call becomes a prayer of humility, hope, and trust.

Deliver us from evil. What is evil? Is it a basic principle, or is it a tendency which has been let go unchecked until its owner has cut the sinews of endeavor and must demand assistance in ridding himself of it? Possibly both. It is an abnormal thing, at variance with God's laws. It may be an inherited tendency: it may be the offspring of temptation and non-resistance. James says, "A man is tempted when he is enticed of his own lust."

It is told of a famous portrait-painter that in his youth he searched all lands for a type to represent his ideal of innocence and beauty. He found it at last in a little child's face. When, in old age, the artist had won his fame and was

wearing his honors, he desired to paint a companion-piece to his early picture—a face typical of the serenity and holiness of an old age, beautifully spent. One day a bloated, unkempt, self-slaughtered man knocked at his studio door. His palsied limbs could hardly carry him, his bleared eyes could scarcely see. He said to the artist: "Here I am again. You once painted me, when I was a little child, and you got both money and fame for the picture. What will you give me now to sit for the new picture?" But the boy had not denied the body, and the soul of him had fled in disgust for his evil life. Never once had he prayed to be led from temptation or delivered from evil, though he may have recited the prayer over and again. Real prayer calls for real co-operation. God is called the covenant-keeping God, and often we throw it up to him that he is not looking after us, as he promised. But nowhere has he ever promised to do all of the covenant-keeping. Go back and read the covenants. They always read, "If thou wilt . . . I will." A covenant means a promise on both sides, and failure of either party is disastrous to its provisions. We are willing enough to pray to be kept from *the results* of unresisted evil—but we have no

promise in the word that such a petition will obtain fulfilment.

The revised translation of the Scriptures writes the verse thus, "Deliver us from THE evil," meaning, we suppose, that mystic principle which, like yeast or leaven in bread, changes and ferments the whole mass; or like the plague-spot, innocent-looking enough at first, which spreads and spreads, and creates a leprosy over the whole body. But weakness, disease, degeneration, bequeathments of evil ancestors—these, evil though they be, and powerful to breed further troubles, these are not *the* evil. They are but the results and ramifications of it. But we are allowed to be much in prayer for deliverance from these results, and the one hope we have for relief is the fact that Jesus, our Lord, taught us to pray for it. It is certain, then, that evil is not hopelessly ineradicable, not permanently victorious.

How was Christ delivered from the evil of Satan's temptations? This was his reply: "Worship the Lord thy God, and serve him only." Such is the prescription of the Great Physician for keeping a man secure. Keep your fellowship with the Lord God intimate and constant. Make his written word a part of your knightly panoply.

How beautiful and suggestive, yea, how comforting, are the next words in the story of Temptation and Deliverance, "Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him." Did you know you were being watched while temptation was winnowing you? Did you think, poor, harried soul, that you were alone? Why, you were being compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses. When thou passest through the waters, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fires, thou shalt not be burned. Cast all your cares upon him, for he careth for you. Even the hairs of your head are numbered. Believe that your Father knoweth what things you have need of.

"Then the devil left him." When? When his trust in God was complete and manifest. I read in the New Testament these words, "Ye shall have power," and I ask, When? I long for power. When can I have it? Listen, "When the Holy Ghost has come upon you." That is my passport to power. There is none other.

In a long life I have met many a soul who has been bowed down with grief and discouragement, who has almost lost faith in himself, because he was feeling the power of temptation. He thought

his temptation was a sin of his own, and it took the sunshine out of his life; it almost took away his power to overcome some worse temptation. Really the time to doubt yourself is when your temptations are few. If you were not possessed of something valuable, Satan would hardly care to waste time in tempting you. The man who lives in a hut does not believe in burglars. He listens to such stories as a fairy-tale of the rich. "Why," he says, "my house lies open all the time, and I am never burglarized." Does Satan assault you? There must be something noble in you which he would steal from you; some high desire he would extract from you; some half-winged prayer he would deflect from heaven's ear. Does the Father permit temptation to assault you? There must be some virtue he would chisel and shape. He must, like the sculptor, see in your hard marble form some angel imprisoned whom he would liberate and glorify, even if it must be done with hammer and mallet, and hard pressures, and much cutting away. It was immediately after the Voice had testified, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," that Jesus was led up of the Spirit to be tempted of the devil.

So we may safely pray, "Deliver us from evil" —as Elijah was delivered at Cherith; as Elisha was delivered at Dothan; as David was delivered from Goliath; as the apostles were delivered from prison; as the Allies were delivered at Piave; as many a trusting, praying, sorrowful saint is being delivered today in the silence and quietness of her lonely chamber.

There are two very suggestive correlative passages in the Bible. One is found in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. It tells of the martyrs.

"These all died." Was that the last of them? Was it worth while for them to suffer so and trust so and follow a vision? They died. What a gloomy picture! What a waste of those splendid virtues—hope and faith and trust in God!

Listen. Here is the correlative passage. It is found in that wonder-book which as yet no man has fathomed. We read: "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Palms are for victors. Palms are for live people, not dead ones. "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are

these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? . . And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation. . . Therefore are they before the throne of God. . . They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. . . And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Thank God for the courageous souls who daily pray this Seventh Petition, and then go out to their daily tasks—in dimness often, often misunderstood, sometimes in the rout of despair; falling, rising, following the star as best they may. They inspire lesser souls by their courage and their wonderful trust.

Such is the Lord's Prayer. It is not a form, or a ritual. It is a model. It covers every essential feature of petition, aspiration, praise. It has nourished the spiritual life of many generations. Soldiers in the trenches bear witness that it strengthened their arms and nerved their hearts in many a far-flung battle. It has witnessed the crumbling of many systems of theology, constantly adjusting itself to progressive thought. It is the wonder of the world.

The Doxology

The Lord's Prayer is recorded only by Matthew and Luke. Matthew adds the rich, helpful, praiseful doxology: "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." A few versions of the New Testament, as the Syriac, the oldest of them all, have this doxology. Luke excludes it altogether, closing the prayer with the petition "Deliver us from evil," as if leaving the soul alone at the altar, alone with God and with a definite remembrance of the persistency of temptation, man's impotence, and his entire dependence on the Father for deliverance. Luke tells how the disciples, jealous of the followers of John the Baptist, asked for some ritual of prayer, and received this simple model, addressed to the inner man and the secret things of the soul. Possibly the disciples expected something directed against their enemies—something vindictive and blasting. We know the Baptist's fearless way of speaking to the multitudes and his open rebuke of secret sins. If he had given a form of prayer, we may be sure it would have been strenuous enough.

However commentators may differ as to the authenticity of the doxology, all are agreed that it forms a beautiful and appropriate ending to this pregnant prayer, referring, as it does, man's thought from self and the demands of self to God's kingdom, power, and glory, hallowing his name on the way from the closet to the world. It is largely taken from David's benediction at that time when the people freely offered their treasures for the house of God.

AMEN

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